

AMENDMENTS

In the Specification:

Page 1, line 4, insert the heading:

FIELD AND BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Page 1, line 5, to page 2, line 13, amend the paragraphs as follows:

The invention relates to a bone spreader ~~of the type specified in the preamble of claim 1~~ and comprising for spreading bone parts apart including two parallel tubular pin holders, which are connected to one another by a parallel guide system, and two pins to be connected to the bone parts that are to be spread apart. In connection with the invention, this term also includes screws. The pins are introduced parallel to one another into the bone parts that are to be spread apart. Their free sections are introduced into the pin holders. When these are now moved away from one another or moved closer to one another by means of the parallel guide system, this movement is transmitted to the bone parts. This type of spreader is especially suitable for distraction of two cervical vertebral bodies for the purpose of implantation of a cervical intervertebral prosthesis, as the vertebral bodies are guided parallel to one another during the distraction. However, this parallel attribute applies only with respect to the direction of the pin holders. Two degrees of freedom remain. These are, on the one hand, a rotation of the bone parts about the pin axis, which for various reasons is of no consequence in normal circumstances, and, on the other hand, a displacement in the direction of the pin holders, which displacement can be prevented by a locking device ~~known in the form of a screw connection, which is awkward to use.~~ For this purpose, a first known design of this locking device, disclosed in WO03/024344, uses a friction clamp, which in many cases is not secure enough. A second known design, disclosed in US 6,340,363, uses a clamping screw or some kind of clamp. A clamping screw, however, cannot be maneuvered, or may be maneuvered only with difficulty, deep within the operating site. The issue remains, furthermore, of how a clamp can be designed so that it is both secure and easy to operate.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention, this disadvantage is remedied by the fact that the locking device is designed as a quick coupling, namely in the form of a locking finger which is guided between a locking position and a release position in a transverse movement tangentially with respect to the pin holder and at least one transverse groove in the pin, into which groove the locking finger engages in the locking position. Several transverse grooves may also be provided, one of which is chosen for the engagement of the locking finger. To ensure that the locking finger cannot be lost as a separate part, according to a further feature of the invention, it is designed as a hook which is mounted so as to be pivotable about an axis extending approximately parallel to the pin holder. The arrangement is especially simple and clear if the hook is arranged at the open end of the pin holder closer to the parallel guide system.

Page 2, line 13, insert the heading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Page 2, line 22, insert the heading:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Replace the Abstract of the Disclosure with the abstract attached in the first Appendix.